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RECENT LITERATURE.

DAVIS'S TEXT-BOOK OF BIOLOGY.[1]—Of this book of 462 pages a little more than one-third is devoted to plants, and hence properly to be noticed by the present reviewer. Unlike many works on biology, this is in fact two independent books printed and bound together. Each part has its separate bibliography and index-glossary, and there are no references from the one part to the other. One is puzzled, indeed, to see any good reason for calling the book one on biology: it is rather a botanical and a zoological book bound together.

Part I. takes up in succession Saccharomyces, Bacteria, Mucor and Penicillium as representing the fungi; Protococcus, Spirogyra, Fucus, Chara and Nitella, representing the Algæ; Funaria and Polytrichum for the Mosses; Pteris and Nephrodium (Aspidium) for the Ferns; Pinus for Gymnosperms, and a "typical Flowering plant" for the Angiosperms. Following these are short chapters on Comparative Vegetable Morphology and Physiology, and the Classification of Plants.

The book is not a laboratory manual at all, but rather a text-book to be read or studied. The author himself, in his preface, after referring to the several excellent works on practical biology which have appeared within the last few years, and the want of a comprehensive work on theoretical biology, says that "the object of the present text-book is, therefore, to supply such a systematic and simple exposition of the subject within small compass as, it is hoped, will be found helpful, both to those who are studying alone and to those who have the advantage of guidance in their work." Theoretical biology is, then, the scope of the work, and in this it stands in sharp contrast with Huxley and Martin's well-known laboratory handbook.

The treatment of Saccharomyces—the Yeast Plant—may illustrate the style of the book. First the Morphology is concisely discussed, giving the reader a good idea of the shape, size and structure of the plant, the latter including the cell-wall, protoplasm and vacuoles, with a doubtful reference to a nucleus. Secondly, the Physiology is taken up, and here nutrition is discussed in such a manner as to bring out the fact that the plant's food is a solution consisting essentially of carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, sulphur and phosphorus. Destructive metabolism, respiration, and reproduction follow, each including a brief summary of the principal facts.

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[1] *A Text-book of Biology:* comprising Vegetable and Animal Morphology and Physiology. Designed more especially to meet the requirements of the intermediate science and preliminary scientific examinations of the London University. By J. R. Ainsworth Davis, B.A., Trinity College, Cambridge; Lecturer on Biology in the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth. With numerous illustrations, "Glossary and Examination Questions." Philadelphia: P. Blakiston, Son & Co., 1012 Walnut street. 1888. [All rights reserved.]

In the main, the book appears to be brought up to our present knowledge, and, if one must use such a book at all, it may be recommended as giving in a condensed and systematic form the principal facts of Vegetable Morphology and Physiology. It remains to be said that, while the book bears the name of the American publisher on its title-page, both printing and binding were done by a London house, a new title-page alone having been pasted in to replace the original one.—*Charles E. Bessey.*

MICROSCOPICAL PHYSIOGRAPHY OF THE ROCK-MAKING MINERALS. By H. Rosenbusch. Translated by Joseph P. Iddings. New York: Wiley & Sons, 1888. Illustrated by 121 wood-cuts and 26 plates of photomicrographs. xiii. and 333 pp.—With the excellent translation of Prof. Rosenbusch's book, presented us by Mr. Iddings, there can no longer remain an excuse for the continued neglect of microscopical petrography by our colleges and advanced schools. Heretofore the immense mass of facts relating to the microscopical properties of minerals which have accumulated within the past ten or fifteen years, have been beyond the reach of those who are not familiar with the German language. The excellent compendium of Prof. Rosenbusch has not been available to English-speaking students on either side of the Atlantic. It is a matter for congratulation that the first translation of this book should have been made into English by an American Scientist, and by one who has proven himself so capable of undertaking the task as has Mr. Iddings.

The translation is at the same time an abridgement. The six hundred and sixty-four pages of the original have been reduced by the translator to three hundred and thirty-three. This has been accomplished by omitting the bibliography (which occupies eighty-eight pages in the original), by excluding the purely historical portions, and by restricting within narrow limits the discussion of the anomalous action of certain minerals in polarized light. Since these matters would be of little value to any but the advanced student in the subject, and since such a one must of necessity go to the original sources for his information, Mr. Iddings has done well in deciding not to confuse the mind of the beginner with too much of the unessential. So far as a hurried reading of the book allows one to judge, everything essential to the study of the optical properties of the rock-forming minerals has been retained, and in many cases additions have been made to the description of those minerals